WELLSPRINGS

QUESTIONS AND ISSUES SHEET - TV-10 INPUT program - "Puppet or Person?"

1. How much are counsellors and professional advisors influenced by their ethnic or religious background, financial status, or personal bias in determining what is best for their clients?

2. Is contemporary academic training more likely to challenge or reinforce use of conventional, white, middle-class standards and goals as norms or measures of behavior?

3. For whom and for what sort of problems, if any, should counselling services be supplied by government agencies or subsidies? How much does this imply coercion or control of individual lives?

4. Are there any professional ethics or practices which limit a client's freedom to determine whether he is receiving constructive counsel, needs to consult another counsellor, or is receiving inadequate assistance .

5. What self-regulating measures or associations exist among professional counsellors ? How effective are they in uncovering and disciplining , and protecting the public from, malpractice or incompetence? (for example from drug addiction, emotional disturbance, unscrupulous practice or overcharging, among psychiatrists, physicians, clergymen, marriage counsellors, vocational and school counsellors, etc.)

6. What is to prevent the counselling professionals from developing the excesses which arose in other unchecked, controlling or dominating groups such as, slave owners, medieval church hierarchy, laissez-faire capitalists, "Divine Right" monarchists, etc. perpetuating their own power of decision-making.

7. Under what circumstances should the counseller act as an advisor who gives the client sufficient information to make decisions affecting his life, and when should the counseller make the decision?

8. What can be done about the far-too-frequent situations where professional counsellors and advisors are "unable to relate" to their clients?

9. How much do the mass media tend to condition people to accept uncritically the advice o of specialists in counselling? How much do advertising and popularized versions or accounts of scientific studies or techniques discourage people from seeking professional help?

10. What can be done about differences in standards of treatment, counselling and advice given to the rich and that given to the poor?

11. Should professionals respect the "common sense" or experience of clients when it runs counter to their professional training, theories or judgement? By what process are theories invalidated and new ones developed?

12. How can independent, non-professional community groups protect a client's interests when he has doubts about the quality or relevance of professional services?

How do specialists regard the role of clergymen, community organizers and others whose counsel may be sought on the basis of trust rather than professional training?

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